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THE
HOPES OF MATRIMONY:
A Poem.

THE
HOPES OF MATRIMONY:

A Poem.

BY JOHN HOLLAND,

Author of

"SHEFFIELD PARK," &c.

Hail, wedded love, mysterious law!—by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.

• • • • •

Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets:
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings;
Reigns here and revels. *Milton.*

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PREFACE.

THE following Poem is submitted, with unfeigned diffidence, both for the subject and execution, to the ordeal of public opinion, and the approbation of the writer's friends.

Whether the judgment which shall be pronounced upon it, be favourable, or otherwise, is a question of much less importance to the author in his literary, than his moral character. Conscious, however, of the integrity of his own intentions, and not altogether distrustful of his abilities, he has ventured to devote the brief leisure of a situation in life which compels him to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and to labour for the support of a family, with the welfare of which he stands connected as a brother and a son, to the composition of the present work. If

he have succeeded, he will feel gratified by knowing, that others are participators in his success ; if he have failed, it will be some consolation to his friends to know, that the risk of such failure rested with himself alone. The work has been written, printed, and published, with little hope, less encouragement, and no patronage from any individual.

“ Marriage is honourable in all,” says the Apostle of Jesus Christ ; and “ Marriage,” says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, (an apostle of our own country, and one of the brightest ornaments of the church,) “ is the mother of the world, and preserves kingdoms, and fills cities, churches, and even heaven itself. Celibacy, like the fly in the heart of an apple, dwells in a perpetual sweetness ; but sits alone, and is confined, and dies in singularity ; but marriage, like the useful bee, builds an house, and gathers sweetness from every flower, and labours and unites into societies and republics ; and sends out colonies, and fills the world with delicacies ; and obeys their king, keeps order, and exercises many virtues, and promotes the in-

terest of mankind ; and is that state of things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world. Marriage hath in it the labour of love, and the delicacies of friendship, the blessings of society, and the union of hands and hearts. It hath in it less of beauty, but more of safety, than a single life ; it is more merry and more sad ; is fuller of joys and fuller of sorrow ; it lies under more burthens, but is supported by the strength of love and charity, and these burthens are delightful." If the author of the following poem has transgressed the rules of public decorum, by recommending such a subject, that public is possessed both of the right and the means of chastising his temerity ; to the award of this tribunal, therefore, he cheerfully submits.

The objections of the grave, and the sarcasms of the flippant, the writer is prepared to expect ; to the former he shall concede, what himself asks, the right of private judgment, when not opposed to public utility ; to the latter he has nothing to say, except that he writes not for *them*.

Should the present poem fail to secure any approbation of its execution or design, the writer trusts, that to have attempted to adorn and recommend such a subject, will never embitter, at the hour of death, those feelings with which he should wish to review the actions of his life as a MAN, a POET, and a CHRISTIAN.

J. H.

Sheffield Park,
June 28, 1822.

The Hopes of Matrimony.

PART I.

B

ANALYSIS OF PART I.

Introduction—The theme of Love and Matrimony preferable to details of War—Invocation to Wedlock—Few comparatively, in any country, are born to the heritage of eminent Genius, but all in every climate are subject to the influence of Love—It operates early and powerfully, and is manifested even in Childhood—The subject of Love has often been treated with wantonness; the poet or the man who can be thus guilty, deserves the hatred and the abhorrence of both sexes—Man is formed to love; he is, therefore, the victim of unsatisfied desires while single—Courtship, if virtuous and propitious, a happy period—Often uncertain in its progress, and delusive in its issue—Illustrative anecdote—Love, a powerful stimulus to noble exertion—As it was born in Paradise, so it is still enamoured of rural scenery—Roche Abbey—Story of Palemon—The exercise of reciprocal affection in the Sexes alone can develop the whole mystery of Feeling and Humanity—Man's Infidelity in Affection censured—Parlour Courtship—Supposition that all have experienced the passion of Love—The Marriage of Children a source of parental joy—The desire for Offspring is general, noble, and natural—Childless Wedlock asserted to be happier and more honourable than Celibacy.

The Hopes of Matrimony.

PART I.

YOUTH.

Love and Courtship.

“ In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true love consists not: love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges, bath his seat
In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend.”

Milton, Par. Lost, viii. 588.

I SING Connubial hopes: though some may deem
Alike undignified the song and theme;
Yet, all too weak to bear the brazen shield
Through the red vintage of the battle-field;
To pluck the carnage-clusters in my path,
And tread the wine-press of the warrior's wrath;
Be mine the pride, with sweet and tranquil lays,
To win unenvied fame, and humbler praise.

Where are the blessings of the men, who hurl'd
Destruction's thunderbolts upon the world ?
Where all the trophies Macedon e'er won
By her great Philip, and his greater son ?
No arch remains ; not e'en a mouldering bust
Marks where earth sepulchres an empire's dust !
Yet there, sublime, the epic bard might reap
Harvests of glory where the conquerors sleep ;
On *him*, proud Fame ! thy laurel'd meed bestow—
I leave Ulysses' strength to bend his bow.

Hail, wedded joy ! thou fairest growth of all
That bloom'd in Eden, or survived the Fall :
Thy leaves, thy flowers, thy fragrance, and thy
fruit,
Though human lips were dumb, and song were
mute,
Were cheap and precious still, whate'er the price,
Save of lost Innocence or Paradise :—
Thy leaves—with *Love's* immortal verdure green :
Thy flowers—the beauty of each marriage scene :
Thy fragrance is the buds of nuptial bliss,
The wife's first smile—the infant's earliest kiss :

Thy fruits—why name the loveliest fruits on earth,
A numerous offspring clustering round the hearth?
Oh! might the exulting theme exalt my song,
And the verse kindle as it flows along.

Creative genius we but rarely find—
Few are the ruling spirits of mankind :
All are not noble, great, or wise, or good,
As flows patrician or plebeian blood :
But all are born to love—in every breast,
This master-passion Nature hath impress'd ;
And though its polish learning may impart,
Love is the native coinage of the heart ;
Current in every clime, on every coast,
In Afric's torrid heat, 'midst Zembla's frost ;
Yet scorch'd, or frozen, there its worth alone
Transcends all price in either temperate zone.

In childhood's dawn, when budding reason springs,
There the young passion spreads its cherub wings ;
Bids new and undefined emotions start,
Plays in the mind, and flutters round the heart.
The boy at school prefers, with artless smile,
Some favourite girl, that flatters him the while ;

Shares in her tasks with pleasure through the day,
Selects her as his mate at evening play;
With her most happy, seated at her side,
His sugar-plums and presents to divide;
She writes the copy-line which he prefers,
And all his little championship is her's :
And many a youth, amidst each knotty rule,
Has learn'd the alphabet of love at school.

Shame on that bard, whose wanton muse can
dart

Insidious mischief through a guileless heart ;
Whose mind betrays, in each unhallow'd line,
Its poisoning purpose and its fell design.
Rather than song to wantonness should turn,
The heart should wither, and the hand should burn !
Perish the strain, and fade that poet's name,
Who sins in verse, and glories in his shame ;
For his offence, who modesty offends,
How just is woman's scorn—the scorn of all his
friends !

This be my lot, should song of mine e'er prove
To female honour false, or VIRTUOUS LOVE.

Till Hymen consecrate the nuptial hour,
Man is a selfish, solitary flower ;
In vain the blossoms of his heart expand,
They fall ungather'd, as unshared they stand ;
Like fragrant wall-flowers on the murky tomb,
O'er buried hopes his best affections bloom.

Life's sweetest hours in virtuous courtship glide,
While virgin graces veil the future bride ;
While hope prophetic deems the granted kiss,
The promise, pledge, and seal of future bliss.
Soft are the whispers of the twilight grove,
Where stillness guards the confidence of love ;
While young affections, in their ardent rush,
Inspire the youthful plea, the maiden blush,—
His plea for wedlock, earnest without guile ;
Her half-reluctant, half-consenting, smile :
For courtship, which, at length, obtains its suit,
Is but the blossom of a precious fruit,
Matured and plucked through future years—through
life,

In the blest intercourse of man and wife.

Yet in this hopeful morning of his years,
O'er courtship's sun may pass a cloud of fears ;

Perhaps the angel of his hopes may be
More rich, more proud, of higher birth than
he,—

A star revolving in superior light,
Whose rare effulgence fascinates his sight:
Ah, then what strong anxieties contend
With hopes that rich as rainbow-colours blend,—
An arch of beauty, whose transcendent span
Adorns the maiden, and deceives the man;
Or melts away, where it so sweetly glow'd,
Like day-break from the rosy-bosom'd cloud.

Beside yon hill, whose steep and wooded brow
Casts a broad shadow o'er the vale below,
In the same cottage where his life begun,
There dwelt a youth, his mother's only son;
Whose heart was fix'd, in buoyant seventeen,
On the gay charmer of the village-green:
He loved and hoped, till love and hope became
That wild desire which reason cannot tame.
Intense and ardent while his passion grew,
Through every vein the strong infection flew:
His cherish'd visions of prospective bliss
Brighten'd in fancy, and the unripe kiss

Of green virginity seem'd mellowing fast,
And half the term of anxious courtship past.
Alas! while Walter thus confess'd her charms,
The faithless maiden bless'd a rival's arms!

Ye who have down Despair's tremendous slope
Been headlong cast by disappointed Hope,
Too sadly yet your feelings may recall
Of wreck'd affections, what survive that fall;
When she in whom your earthly bliss was bound,
Slew your heart's peace, and left a cureless wound.

Thus Walter felt; and at an ardent age,
While lash'd and fever'd by his passion's rage,
He vow'd, in utter hopelessness of prayer,
The felon vengeance of his own despair.
—Ye who the sufferer's faults could lightly scan,
Hold nought of kindred-fellowship with man;
Perchance your apathy may ill conceal,
Beneath a marble breast, a heart of steel.
—He left mankind, and dwelt through years forgot,
In the lone attic of his mother's cot;
Where sickness spared, and death delay'd to strike,
Till shrunk and shrivell'd from aught human-like,

The monster manikin at length resign'd
The upright figure and the reasoning mind;
Crouch'd on his calves, with beard and nails
unshorn,

Uncheer'd alike by midnight, noon, or morn—
Racking his maudlin brain, the idiot gropes,
A wretched suicide of marriage hopes.

Hail, Love ! omnipotent o'er man below,
Imperial arbiter of weal or woe;
Of thee what bards have sung in classic strains,
Thy painful joys, thy most delightful pains !
Thou morning star ! whose rising is confest
Hope's radiant day-spring in the youthful breast ;
Whose influence mild, since rolling time began,
Unbrutes the savage, and exalts the man.
Oft hast thou proved, e'en to the bold and wise,
The spur to zeal—the soul of enterprise :
Oft hast thou led the merchant far from home,
An ocean-pilgrim round the world to roam.
While, 'midst the tempest clouds that might
obscure,
Hope was his chart, and Love his cynosure :

Oft hast thou led the soldier to the field,
Adorn'd his sword, and garlanded his shield;
The spirit of his courage thou hast stood,
And fir'd his hero-soul to deeds of blood :
Alas, that Love should crown him, who will dare,
Red with the stain and guiltiness of war,
To seek his fane, and, sword in hand, invade
The peaceful precincts of the myrtle shade !

Love, born in Paradise, where'er he roves,
Is still enamour'd of the fields and groves ;
Enthroned in rural green, his sway imparts
Sublime obedience to his subjects' hearts :
His sceptre there, the hawthorn-blossom'd spray,
And on his brow, the coronal of May.

Where deep-embowering vestibules approach
Thy old monastic fane, my favourite Roche,—
Placed, like a gem, whose emerald hue prevails
On the green bosom of the queen of vales ;
Where devious walks, and glades of beauty, seem
The prompt creations of the lover's dream ;
There rise umbrageous clumps—there zephyr slakes
The fainting breezes as they skim the lakes,

To fan the nymph-like wanderer on the ridge,
Or in the bower, or by the rustic bridge,
Who seems, with heavenly smile, and light-robed
form,

Like Mercy's angel in Affliction's storm.

In these retreats, to Love and Friendship dear,
Oft let me stray to mark the varying year,
When Spring's warm spirit swells the bursting
buds,

Or Summer's gorgeous robe arrays the woods ;
When Autumn's dying, mingling, tints prevail,
Or Winter strips the trees and strews the vale :
Here would I oft with playful freedom range,
Explore each scene, and note each season's change :
With her whose courteous speech, and heart sincere,
Would sweeten converse, and each walk endear.
With ANNA's grace the charming maid would move
Would teach me how to feel, and how to love.

A youth I knew, whom science ne'er had taught
To climb the steep ascents of human thought ;
In fortune's search he never sigh'd to roam,
Though plain his fare, and plainer still his home.

He never saw the world, nor long'd to see—
Unlearn'd, untravell'd, inexperienced he :
And e'en the living volume of mankind
Was scarce half open'd to his curious mind :
Yet though to poverty's hard lot decreed,
Oft have I heard him trill a simple reed :
'Twas love attuned his pipe, though bolder themes
Inspired by day his thoughts—by night his dreams :
His strain could soothe my heart, or bid it
ache ;

I loved the minstrel for his music's sake.
Like his, seclusion nursed my earliest years,
Mine all his heritage of hopes and fears ;
In me confiding much—my friend reposed
His hopes with mine, to me his pains disclosed ;
And ne'er from my remembrance can depart
This warm confession of Palemon's heart :—

“ I once had hopes—youth's warm delusions
past—

“ In Love's elysium to repose at last;
“ To find on earth some partner in my care,
“ Wise without pride, and without beauty fair;

“ Whose daily worth might teach me how to live,
“ Reprove my faults—or oh, those faults forgive !
“ To realize the dreams of nuptial joy,
“ And what remain’d of life, for heaven employ;
“ In rural ease to see my table spread,
“ And eat with thanks contentment’s frugal bread,
“ Grateful for blessings which might still prolong
“ The triple bliss of Friendship, Love, and Song.
“ But ah ! for me those fairy hopes are o’er ;
“ And youth, romantic once, returns no more :
“ This feeling heart, which nought can turn to
stone,
“ Shall live and die in poverty—alone;
“ Too proud—perchance too generous,—to invest
“ Its pains and errors in a happier breast.
“ Though woman’s precious tears may ne’er be shed
“ On the green turf that wraps my mouldering
head
“ Some partial friend may heap PALEMON’S tomb,
“ And flowers perennial in its precincts bloom.”
Of life’s sublimest joys he knows but part,
Who never held a place in *woman’s* heart ;

A stranger to her exquisite controul,
Whose smile alone can humanize the soul;
Whose halcyon presence, in its wildest strife,
Can still the storms, and calm the sea of life:
He never knew how much that man is blest,
Whom woman hath preferr'd above the rest;
Towards whom she turns her heart's immense desire,

Unquench'd by floods, and unconsumed by fire;
For whom her wishes and her prayers arise
Daily on earth, and nightly to the skies:
Stronger than death, affection for his sake
Where woman loves, life were a ready stake:
Risk'd through all perils, faithful at his side,
In battle, shipwreck, toss'd on earth or tide,
For him alone she owns a tender heart,
With him in thought she acts a parent's part:
In his affliction she is more distrest,
Sad in his sorrow, in his welfare blest.

Yet learn, oh youth! whose pride of hope
remains,
Should love's delicious passion thrill thy veins;

And should the maid whom thou hast deem'd
divine,

Confess her treasure of affections thine ;
Oh ! guard and cherish well the precious prize—
Love droops—neglected ; or deserted—dies ;
Scarce rear'd on earth, this flower of tender joy,
A thought can blast it, or a breath destroy :
Like the frail hyacinth, and sweet as frail,
Nursed in the sun, it withers in the gale.

Too oft hath man's ungrateful nature cursed
The sex that bore him, suckled him, and nursed :
Oft hath the strength ordain'd to shield a form
Weak as the tulip in the Summer storm,
In desperate cruelty broke loose, and shed
Wild passion's whirlwind-rage on woman's head :
Or worse—hath gain'd, with serpent wiles, her
breast,

Murder'd her peace, and stabb'd her future rest ;
With felon purpose bribed her heart, and stole
Her virgin worth—the jewel of her soul.

Love, born in Paradise, wherein he roves,
Is still enamour'd of the fields and groves ;

Yet not alone in woodland, grove, or field,
Are marriage-hopes born, cherish'd, and reveal'd.
How swift those hours of virtuous courtship seem,
When the grate's embers shed a ruddy gleam,
And soft and sober'd, the reflection falls
Of parlour-twilight o'er the pictured walls :
How oft, inspired in such an hour as this,
Hath new-born *love* pourtray'd its schemes of bliss;
And youthful ardour the warm passion wrought
To the delirium of romantic thought !
Expressions then, how tenderly inspired,
How eloquent the tongue which Love hath fired !
Hope meeting hope, and vow for vow is given,
Till earthly troth seems ratified in heaven ;
And each usurps, with exquisite controul,
The mild dominion of a dearer soul.

Is there a manly bosom can enfold,
A human heart 'so wither'd, dead, and cold,
As not to feel, or never to have felt,
At genial Love's approach, its ices melt ?
No—in the desert of the dreariest breast,
Some verdant spots its presence have confest ;

Though parch'd and bloomless, and as wild as bare,
A rill of nature *once* meander'd there :
E'en where Arabia's arid waste entombs
Whole caravans, the green oasis blooms.

Auspicious hour ! when faithful lovers prove
High consummation of their virtuous love ;
When from the altar, crown'd with youthful pride,
The exulting bridegroom leads the affianced bride ;
While she whose conquering charms all eyes confess,
Yields but to triumph—triumphs but to bless.

For this the sire's consenting voice is won—
Presents the daughter, or accepts the son ;
'Tis then the father's heart enjoys, on earth,
His marriage-day's resuscitated mirth :
He rallies now life's yet remaining powers,
And reigns the monarch of the festal hours ;
While at his side, with equal joy elate,
The matron-queen supports her husband's state.

Rapt into visions of prophetic thought,
The distant future o'er the mind is brought ;
In hope, the patriarch-sire affects to see
An unborn line of long posterity : x

His name pronounced from heir to heir he hears,
Borne on the echoes of a thousand years ;
Himself, meanwhile, lord of an awful place,
Between a buried and an unborn race.

Unenvied he who never felt a sigh,
Lest, at his death, his father's name should
die;

Who ne'er beheld, mysteriously alive,
Himself through his own progeny revive—
That proudest hope to human prescience given,
That polar star in Love's terrestrial heaven :
Still true to that, through life's mysterious chart,
Instinctive turns the magnet of the heart.

What though Love's prescience err, and heirs
should fail,
And childless wedlock o'er our prayers prevail;
Or at the birth of parentage and joy,
The Power that gave, reclaim'd our infant boy ;
And Heaven, as with an unpropitious breath,
Stranded affection's fragile bark in death :
Yet, like a wreck abandon'd to the wave,
Ah ! who would float unpitied to the grave ?

In cheerless solitude, with none to bless,
Unshared his joys—unsoften'd his distress;
Where he who feels the wound must pour its balm,
And the grief-madden'd heart itself must calm.
No!—learn, howe'er life's vernal sunshine fling
Its warm enchantments o'er thy youthful spring,
Though near and beautiful the valley lies,
And far and faintly seem the hills to rise,
Beyond their summits, know, that sun must set,
Cloudless and clear, or clouded with regret;
And in those vales, and on those hills appear,
The snows and storms—the winter of thy year.

END OF PART I.

The Hopes of Matrimony.

PART II.

ANALYSIS OF PART II.

Invocation to Woman—Her claims on the kindness and protection of Man—Though many female names mentioned in history are deservedly reprobated, many others are recorded with honour and eulogium—The female Sex, however celebrated for beauty or vivacity in other countries, are yet most celebrated for personal charms and connubial fidelity in the British Isles—Eulogium on Home, as endeared by wedlock associations—Digression on Raphael's picture of the Virgin and Child, at Wentworth—The Contemplation of this picture feigned to influence, in youth, the hopes of Matrimony—Matronage and Infancy—Nursing: Apostrophe to Roscoe—A filial Tribute—Picture of a happy family during their out-of-door recreations—Happiness not partial, nor confined to the rich—The labourer's return at evening to his cottage—Invocation to Health—Sickness in domestic life productive of tenderness and sympathy—Intimation that youth should reflect on the cheerlessness of old age in a single state—Marriage, from impure motives, iniquitous and detestable—Inequality of ages monstrous, especially when the union is coerced and mercenary—Unsuitability of tempers and habits destructive of matrimonial Happiness and personal Peace—An illustrative anecdote.

The Hopes of Matrimony.

PART II.

MANHOOD.

The Marriage State—Domestic Happiness.

Domestic Happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise, that hast survived the fall!
Though few now taste thee unimpair'd and pure,
Or tasting long enjoy thee! too infirm,
Or too incautious, to preserve thy sweets
Unmix'd with drops of bitter, which neglect
Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup:
Thou art the nurse of virtue, in thine arms
She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,
Heaven-born, and destined to the skies again.

Cowper, Task.

HAIL, WOMAN! whose transcendent charms
unfold
Celestial lineaments in earthly mould!
Shrined in the heart, affection bows to thee,
Thou object fair of LOVE's idolatry!
Man boasts his majesty, yet owns the while,
Alike omnipotent, thy frown or smile:

Thy frown can chafe the haughtiest spirit's pride ;
Creation's lord walks humbly at thy side,—
A suppliant, sues for favours at thy seat,
Or bows a slave, and cringes at thy feet.
Thy smile, since woman's empire first began,
Calls up the latent energies of man ;
To high achievements tempts his soul to press,
Thyself his glorious guerdon of success.

Benignant woman ! since thy sex had birth,
An angel of humanity on earth !
'Tis thine for man t' endure maternal throes,
To cherish him, to watch his brief repose ;
To him the elements of thought to teach,
Guard his first step, and prompt his earliest speech ;
'Tis thine to wake the latent powers of youth
To generous manhood and ingenuous truth ;
O'er sinking age to smile in life's eclipse,
And pour the balm of comfort on his lips ;
When o'er his sick-bed bends thy angel form,
Love's bow of promise through affliction's storm.

What, though in Sacred Writ we early find
How fell the sire and mother of mankind ;

How, in this birth-day of transgression, *she*
Pluck'd *first*, and tasted the forbidden tree;
Though Homer's song pursues its epic path
'Twixt Juno's hatred and Pelides' wrath;
And leagued with Greece or Troy, the world in
arms,

Whose torch of discord was an Helen's charms;
And e'en Olympus' forked summit nods,
While heaven's proud queen withstands the sire of
gods:—

Though Cleopatra to the spicy gales
On cooling Cnidus spread her silken sails,
The banner of whose beauty there unfurl'd,
Its conquest lost Marc Antony the world:—
Yet does no record boast the glorious names
Of holy virgins, and unspotted dames,
Whose worth shall live embalm'd in prose or rhyme,
A sweet memorial to the end of time?
Ask Holy Writ of female names approved,
How Sarah, Rachel, and Rebekah loved. +
Eve fell:—hear Gabriel's salutation now:
“Hail, Mary!—blessed among women thou.”

Ask epic song, (though Dido there expires,
A rash love-martyr in unhallow'd fires,)
How chaste Penelope for ten years spurn'd
The suitor-train, till her lost lord return'd :
—Ask history's page, how Rome's Lucretia died,
And Tarquin's death avenged the ravish'd bride.

Yet where—oh where, amidst created space,
Does WOMAN's presence shed the sweetest grace?
Not in the North, where Greenland's winter strows
Stern desolation o'er the realm of snows;
Where dwarfish men with boreal rigours strive,
And bears, and ice-bergs, seem alone to thrive.
—Not where Khorassin's Harem-gardens gem
The sun-nurst regions of the land of Shem,
Where houri-beauties traverse fields of spice,
The Meccan prophet's type of Paradise,
Not in the East, where the sage Bramin roves
Through Hindostan, or Ceylon's spicy groves;
Where superstition triumphs o'er the fire,
And woman burns alive on her dead husband's pyre.
No—most divinely nuptial bliss excels,
Where pure religion with refinement dwells;

Where ALBION'S land a glorious spot is seen,
The world's just wonder, and the ocean's queen ;
And, bound within the girdle of her smile,
Scotia's proud hills, and Erin's emerald isle.
Hither, howe'er th' unchanging Briton roam,
Hope flies for country, friendship, wife, and home.
How fair is HOME, in fancy's picturing theme,
In WEDDED LIFE, in LOVE'S romantic dream !
Thence springs each hope ; there every wish returns,
Pure as the flame, that upward, heavenward, burns ;
There sits the WIFE, whose radiant smile is given,
The daily sun of the domestic heaven ;
And when calm evening sheds a secret power,
Her looks of love emparadise the hour ;
While children round, a beauteous train, appear
Attendant stars revolving in her sphere.

Hail, nuptial bliss ! man's fall could not destroy
Love's first-born hope, life's last-extinguish'd joy ;
For though primeval innocence declined,
Love, wedded love, remain'd to bless mankind ;
And, though in Paradise our parents fell,
And *Justice* moved the Almighty to expel ;

Yet o'er that sad expulsion, *Mercy* threw
One bliss the bowers of Eden never knew ;
When in that new-born ecstasy of life,
The promised mother soothed the weeping wife.

Where radiant Summer pours effulgent noon
Through WENTWORTH's princely halls and proud
saloon ;

Where canvas glows, and marble beauty stands,
Rich from the limner's or the sculptor's hands ;
Ah ! who unmoved that picture can behold,
Curtain'd with silk, enchased with burnish'd gold ;
That meek *Madonna*, in whose features shine
Th' immortal tints of " Raphael the divine ?"
That infant Jesus, in the Virgin's arms,
Reflects the placid meekness of her charms ;
Oft youthful prescience, o'er this semblance thrown,
Hath feign'd the fair reality his own ;
E'en while he paused these mimic charms to
view,

Connubial hope a fairer picture drew ;
In his own family, that moment smiled,
As meek a mother, and as sweet a child.

Lo, marriage life! thy tenderest scene confest,
The matron with her nurseling on her breast;
She in the prime of womanhood, her boy,
Love's new-born angel, makes her heaven of joy.
Oh, what delight the father feels to see
Thy bud and blossom, sweet humanity!
With noblest raptures, heretofore untried,
He clasps his babe, and views his smiling bride.

Ye who resign the mother's charge, to share
Some hireling nurse's mercenary care;
Ah wherefore, thus, unfeelingly forego
The tenderest joys that womanhood can know?
Why, in despite of nature's dictates, scorn
The breast to cherish what the womb hath born?
In such a cause*—in strains as sweet as strong,
Pleading the mother's right, the infant's wrong—
Once sang the bard, whose classic chariot bore
Italia's muse from Arno's flowery shore;
Whose genius could, in native strains, unsphere
The Tuscan numbers on his country's ear,—

* "THE NURSE," a Poem by William Roscoe, Esq.

ROSCOE, who lives with polish'd LEO's fame,
And great LORENZO's Medicéan name.

On thy dear lap, oh Britain ! first I drew
The vital air, and life's warm transports knew ;
An English mother bore me, and caress'd ;
And with the stream of life, upon her breast
I drew the patriot passion, still, which reigns
Pure as the blood from those maternal veins :
Then oh, forgive the hand that would entwine,
With that dear mother's worth, one grateful line !
And Thou, whom heaven hath spared to read this lay,
Accept the filial offering which I pay ;
For when affection's claim I cease to hold,
This hand be nerveless, and this heart grow cold.

Nursed by maternal love, who but hath felt,
At childhood's sweet review, his feelings melt ?
To learn on him how partial fondness smiled,
And saw all beauty center'd in *her* child ?
'Twas nature's voice ; and if perfections crown
One *loveliest* babe—'tis EVERY MOTHER'S OWN.

With what delight, when Summer's noontide eye
Looks warmly down from the meridian sky,

Have we beheld the nuptial group at play,
Bright as the sun, and smiling as the day!—
Exchanged awhile the decorated room,
For garden walks, and nature's greensward loom;
While on the hour, with love's own radiance gilt,
The cup of care was innocently spilt;
There, seated in the cool veranda's screen
Of woven boughs, sweet, blooming, ever green,
The wedded pair, whom bounteous heaven hath blest
With children, taste, health, competence, and rest,
On pleasure's side refinement they engage,
And read some favourite poet's sweetest page—
Thine, MILTON, first, oracular as sweet,
In song redeeming Eden's blissful seat;
Or COWPER, thine, should themes domestic ask
"TRUTH," "HOPE," "RETIREMENT," or the
pleasing "TASK;"
Or SPENSER's page, where, 'midst enchantment,
moves
The "Faery Queene," or virtuous UNA roves;
But chief, ALCÆUS, there thy strains aspire,
Thy "breath of music," and thy "soul of fire,"

Transfused through virtue's joy-devoted hour,
Thrill each fond breast, and charm the nuptial bower.
What joy like this, at Summer noon, can please
The wedded couple in their bower of ease?
His gladden'd smile endears an hour like this,
And *her's*, more sweet, reciprocates the bliss.

Lo, where, detain'd within her guardian view,
The youthful train their little toils pursue;
Some round her knees with fond endearments twine,
As healthful suckers round the parent vine;
Some climb aloft with flexile hand and limb,
Proud the veranda's trellis'd side they trim—
Weave the lithe boughs, or, in directer noon,
Hang the sweet honeysuckle's rich festoon;
Some clip the straggling shrubs to fancied grace,
Or dress the fragrant tendril-crested vase;
Or shed, delighted, o'er the drooping flowers
Plenteous refreshing, artificial showers.

Deem not that heaven unwisely hath preferr'd
The rich and great:—Omniscience hath not err'd:
Impartial happiness, howe'er it fall,
Still, in the bliss of each, is blessing all.

When evening shades release from toils severe
The wearied ploughman and the labouring steer,
With what delight the home-bound rustic sees
The smoke-wreaths curling o'er his village-trees !
His children hail him on the neighbouring moor,
And smile him welcome at his cottage-door :
Neatness within, with many a charm, is seen,
“ The fire fair blazing, and the vestments ” clean :
In patriarchal state he sits caress'd,
And deems the peasant's lot of all most blest :
Thankful to Heaven for mercies daily sent,
Health, home, and food, religion, and content.

Angel of Health, whose rosy pinion bears
Thy precious blessings to domestic cares ;
'Tis thine, while cherub-legions round thee throng,
To bid the flame of life burn clear and strong ;
O'er every nuptial year, 'tis thine to fling
A brighter Summer and a sweeter Spring ;
To give Autumnal fruits a richer glow,
And scatter rose-wreaths o'er stern Winter's snow :
Oh, thrice invoked by husband, child, and wife,
Pour thy rich urns o'er matrimonial life !

Though nursed in poverty, or crown'd with wealth,
Grant them thy richer blessings, bounteous Health.

Yet oft may sickness threaten or destroy
The opening blossoms of domestic joy;
And pallid youth, or sickly childhood, prove
Part of the cherish'd family of love.
'Tis then that sympathy's strong impulse darts
Delicious tenderness through wedded hearts;
A thrill of feeling which must e'er controul
The richer, deeper mysteries of the soul;
Unknown, unfelt, by those who ne'er have shared
The mingled cup affliction hath prepared;
And but imbued with bitterness, when given,
Unblest, unmix'd, unsanctified by heaven.

Sown in HUMANITY, a thousand seeds
Of generous passion and ennobling deeds,
In matrimonial soil, spring up and bloom
Along life's pathway—fragrant to the tomb;
Which had in celibacy but betray'd
A niggard growth, or blossom'd there to fade.
Blest wedlock only can unseal and show
Those streams which God and Nature meant to flow—

Affection's waters, sparkling in the sun,
Or greenly hid, where secretly they run
Through life's fair Paradise, whose clusters vie,
Sweet to the taste, and smiling to the eye ;
Where children stand round the exalted wife,
Branches of knowledge round the tree of life.

Think, gentle youth, howe'er kind Heaven hath shed
Or wealth or poverty upon thy head ;
Think, should thy term of active life expire,
Ere nature hath burnt out her lingering fire ;
And sinews shrunk, and strength decay'd, presage
The old man's rest—the holiday of age ;—
Ah ! who shall then, unblest by child or wife,
With draughts of comfort mix thy cup of life ;
Who smooth thy pillow, or invoke thy rest,
And make this sabbath of existence blest ?
But think not, impious wretch—debased, unjust,
The fool of passion, or the slave of lust—
Ah ! think not, dare not wickedly to stain
Love's altar rites, or hymeneal fane ;
Nor e'er embrace in thy polluted arms
The awful sanctity of virgin charms ;

Her smile by day, her speech by night, would dart
The brand of conscience through thy guilty heart ;
Or, withering in her charms, thou soon wouldst find
Her angel-presence blight thy dæmon-mind :
Unfit for earth—ah ! monster, turn away !
Yet whither turn ? Death, Judgment, Hell !—Oh,
stay—

Unfit for these, unfit to live or die,
Oh, fly from Judgment—to Repentance fly !
Let floods of tears, in deep contrition, roll,—
Lustrate, and melt thy desecrated soul.

At such a sin, denounced as it deserves,
The heart's-blood boils—indignance thrills the
nerves ;

Beneath e'en reptile baseness sinks his shame,
Whose nuptial torch is but a sensual flame.
Could human eyes weep blood, or angel tears,
For human error, stain their sinless spheres,
'Twere, sure, to see affections bought and sold,
Just at the filthy market-price of gold !
To see the daughter, at a sire's command,
Resign to drivelling age her youthful hand ;

In bridal trim, but with averted eyes,
Led, like a victim, to the sacrifice !
Foul desecration of the rites divine,
Where Lucre is the priest at Hymen's shrine :
E'en while the lip her troth is muttering low,
Her truant heart forswears th' unwilling vow :
And oh ! could any perjury be forgiven,
This fault might pass unregistr'd in heaven.
How *can* she yield the blossom of her charms,
To droop and wither in decrepid arms ?
How deem the dearest of the sons of men,
A goatish dotard of threescore and ten ?
Or how accept, as youthful love's return,
That maudlin fondness which her heart must
spurn ?
His lust, ~~like~~ *like* ~~Ætna's~~ spent volcano, reigns
Fire at his heart, and lava in his veins ;
Though crown'd with flame, yet crested still with
snow,
While ashes, stones, and cinders spread below.
Unsuited tempers, as unequal years,
Oft dash the matrimonial cup with tears ;

Oh, Heaven! direct his choice who seeks a wife,
Where he must chuse but once—and chuse for
life ;

Nor let him e'er confirm, with desperate breath,
A choice which nothing should revoke but death.

Brought forth, and cradled on the mountain's
breast,

The first-fledged eaglet of his mother's nest,
Was gentle WILHELM, who, by nature taught,
Grew up the twin of solitude and thought;
Estranged from man, 'twas his delight to trace
Each native scene of savageness or grace ;
Till contemplations, long indulged, impress'd
Their kindred characters within his breast.
He loved to watch the gathering rain-clouds form,
Or hold communion with the thunder-storm ;
To meet at midnight, far from haunts of men,
Vague mountain-spirits in each moonlight glen ;
Or with his link, in some lone spot would pore,
Through musty tomes of philosophic lore ;
'Till feeling in his heart grew wild and strong—
His thoughts were rapture, his 'expressions, song.

While thus he roved, unsway'd from simple truth,
Romantic boyhood blossom'd into youth.

Once, while from these inspiring heights he
stray'd,

His heart was smitten with a lowland maid ;
Fair, fresh, and fragrant, as the rose, she smiled,
And soon the enthusiast by her charms beguiled ;
They loved and wedded ; but, unhappy thrall !
HE felt intensely—SHE felt not at all !

And in the tones which oft the minstrel drew,
She own'd no raptures—no communion knew ;
Heard with indifference strung, his heaven-taught
lyre,

And laugh'd and jeer'd at his poetic fire :
They rest in death, where dew-showers steep
their graves,
And where, through mountain-trees, the tempest
spirit raves.

END OF PART II.

The Hopes of Matrimony.

PART III.

ANALYSIS OF PART III.

Introductory allusion to the Wedding Ring—Apology for the theme—Invocation to the Genius of Campbell—The assertion that Marriage is unfriendly to literary Studies denied—The married scholar's happiness—The nuptial state a blessing to a Poet—The Hopes of Matrimony attend all the destinies of Life, and if unconsummated in Manhood, are likely to upbraid Age—A father is the parent of his country's strength—Allusion to the spot where the promoters of the Revolution of 1668 assembled—Inscription commemorative of that event—The universality and simplicity of Marriage in primitive times—Discouragement to the connexion arising from uncertainty of subsistence in subsequent ages—The consolations of Matrimony during the evening of life, and the repose from active exertion—Retrospects of age: the effects of sounds and scenes, in reviving recollections of the nuptial morning—The gratification of parents, who are suffered to see their children eminent in society—Pitt—Pope—Chantrey—This honourable feeling reciprocal in the child—Vida—The transitoriness of all human enjoyments—Parents, at a period of mental and physical decrepitude, find the most comfortable and interesting asylum in the houses of their children—Death and widowhood—Delusiveness of matrimonial Hopes, when unconnected with Religion—The Conclusion.

The Hopes of Matrimony.

PART III.

(The Marriage State continued.)

AGE.

Offspring and Posterity.

In *wedlock's* sweet endearing lot
Let us improve the scene;
That some may be when we are not,
To tell—that we have been.

Montgomery's Vigil of St. Mark.

To rest
With cross and garland o'er a quiet grave,
And our grandchildren's love for epitaph.

Byron's Manfred.

WHEN heaven-taught fancy waves her magic
wand,
And new creations rise at her command,
What blissful visions at her touch may spring
In the brief circle of the *wedding ring* !
How rich the hand that wears the precious mould,
The jewell'd cipher, or the ungemm'd gold ;

Or when, beneath a crystal shrine, is laid
Love's maiden gift, or beauty's bridal braid ;
Or when with posies oft inscribed, we see,
AFFECTION—FRIENDSHIP—HOPE—ETERNITY—
A badge of dignity to age or youth—
Mysterious symbol of connubial truth !
Thou on whose hand this holy emblem shines,
Whose courteous eye may entertain these lines,
If my theme trespass, or my feet be found,
Unhallow'd, on love's consecrated ground,
Forgive the fault—no other claim I bring—
“ **DAUGHTER OF GOD AND MAN !**” for thee I sing.

Perchance, unwise this venturous lay I plann'd,
And struck the lyre with rash, presumptuous hand ;
Yet what, though pride or vice my motives wrong,
Though few approve, and none applaud the song ;
Say—shall the free-born spirit of the bard
With servile meanness seek the slave's reward ?
No—till the clay lies heavy on my breast,
Howe'er by penury's hard gripe comprest,
This heart, unswayed by censure or applause,
To its last pulse shall throb in virtue's cause.

Sweet bard ! who plumed, with high and heavenly
scope,

The golden pinions of celestial HOPE ;
High as the theme to bid my soul aspire,
Oh ! for thy taste, thy genius, and thy lyre :
Then should the Muse, in nuptial beauty drest,
Love's beckoning angel, stand at once confest ;
Rich, free, and strong, the suasive verse should
flow,

And wedlock-scenes with truths pure colours glow.

A lying spirit fired that Persian's tongue,
Who falsely deem'd, and fearlessly hath sung,
That woman's temper still perversely flows,
Crooked as that famed parent-rib, whence rose
Her glorious form ; when, perfect, pure, and good,
This last, best blessing of creation stood ;
And, like that emblem bone, in every spot
True to its curve, it breaks, but straightens not.
As false hath slander's tongue proclaim'd amiss,
That learning dwells not with connubial bliss ;
That he whom vast or subtle themes perplex,
Or must neglect the muses, or the sex,

To quaff the goblet of connubial bliss ;
On infant cheeks to press a father's kiss ;
With talk familiar, to relax awhile
The scholar's sternness in the husband's smile.

Angel of nuptial bliss ! 'tis thine to shed
Unmingled blessings on the POET'S head :
Poor child of feeling ! too intensely taught,
He breathes the very atmosphere of thought ;
Or, proud at heart, may slight communion hold
With the gross spirits of earth's vulgar mould :
To him creation, in its glorious plan,
Unrolls a volume he alone can scan ;
To him all science, sounds, and scenes can teach
Mysterious dialects of gifted speech !
While wondering nations catch his words of fire,
Inscribe his tomb, and consecrate his lyre.
Yet, what avails him, that his honour'd name
Shall greenly flourish in perennial fame ;
That beauty's hands shall decorate his hearse,
Or woman's honied lips recite his verse !
Ah ! what avails, if he must ever miss
The path of love, the goal of nuptial bliss !

Borne, like a feather, on the breath of praise,
A frown may sink him, or a smile can raise,—
With none to love him, soothe him, or caress,
To nurse in sickness, or in health to bless;
Partake his wealth, his poverty to share,
Crown every joy, and lighten every care.

No—doubly blest must be that poet's bower,
Where myrtles twine with the Parnassian flower;
Where Venus bids her emblem roses breathe
A luscious fragrance o'er the Muse's wreath;
While round the ivied thyrsus deftly move
Her leash of turtles yoked with silken love:
Not with more grace, in fancy's crystal sphere,
Can beauty's goddess to the eye appear;
Or, from the emerald wave, when fresh she
stands
Peerless, on Cytherea's golden sands;
Than when she bids the nuptial chaplet glow
Round young Imagination's graceful brow;
Than when she seems consign'd, with all her
charms,
In virgin dower to bless the poet's arms.

Ah! who would dare to quench each nuptial hope,
Which gives the youthful eye its prescient scope;
To quit, for ever, that mysterious thought,
Through every period of existence wrought;
Which, trembling, turns through life's extremest
storm,

To love's bright cynosure, sweet woman's form!
Ordain'd through each vicissitude to shine,
More prized than wealth—than friendship more
divine.

Cold o'er *his* heart the thoughts of age must come,
Should life be spared, till friendship's voice is dumb;
When through his brain a phantom host of fears
Shall glide—the spirits of upbraiding years!
While on his ear unearthly tones shall swell
The first faint echoes of creation's knell.
His country's hope, with threefold honour crown'd,
Him whom the patriot, husband, sire, is found,
In youth or age, thus dignified, the man
Honours his monarch's rule—his Maker's plan;
Although his progeny, to labour born,
Lawn, ermine, purple, never may adorn;

Nor call'd to rule, nor plumed with fancy's wings,
Start from the furrow into bards and kings,
To fix a name 'midst empire's wreck secure,
Intense as Burns, as Cincinnatus pure.

The father of his country's strength is he
From whom shall spring her last posterity;
While 'midst the whirlwinds of each faction-storm,
Sacred to them shall rise fair freedom's form;
And, with a still small voice, shall whisper nigh,
" Princes may fail—THE PEOPLE never die!"

A moment borne in fancy's airy flight,
I stand on this proud Dorventanian height;
A column seems to rise, with graceful length,
In simple majesty, and Doric strength;
High on its summit, wrought by godlike hands,
The statued form of awful Brutus stands;
Whose eye and features, e'en in stone, unscrol
The marble sternness of his Roman soul.
Lo, there, upon its sculptured base reveal'd,
The scene of Runnymede's immortal field:
While on the dexter side, methinks I read
The feeble record of a glorious deed:—

“ Briton ! if thou art staunch in freedom’s cause,
“ True to thy country’s rights, religion, laws ;
“ If thou art heir to one who knew their worth,
“ Born where the patriot with the man has birth ;
“ If thou art father of a nobler race,
“ Of unborn Englishmen, revere this place !
“ Know, this was freedom’s altar ; here was
 plann’d
“ That league which broke the thraldom of our land ;
“ Here D’ARCY, DANBY, DEVONSHIRE combined
“ To break the chain, forged to enslave the mind,
“ When a weak Prince, at Rome’s tyrannic shrine,
“ Barter’d his country’s liberties—and THINE :
“ Here pledge thy fealty—here too bid thy son
“ Transmit, unsullied, what his sires have won.
“ Spill from thy veins the last of British blood,
“ Ere slavery shall clank where freedom stood :
“ Yield but with life—with life preserve alone
“ Thy COUNTRY, CONSTITUTION, KING, and
 THRONE.”

In the world’s youth, when nature, in her prime,
Smiled with the bloom and infancy of time ;

And man's primeval progeny went forth
To till, and people the undeluged earth ;
A pastoral race, unchang'd from simple truth,
Where man, a century old, was yet a youth ;
Whose patriarchal sire, unshrunk, appears
In the green manhood of five hundred years ;
Then love, with nature's growth, spontaneous sprung,
For love and nature both alike were young ;
The generous sexes felt a mutual flame—
~~Then~~ feeling and confession was the same ;
Both, with chaste confidence of truth, avow'd
That master-hope which, undegenerate, glow'd ;
Till love, impatient of protracted bliss,
Seal'd the proud triumph with the nuptial kiss ;
For swift in courtship sped *their* days and nights,
And few and simple were *their* marriage-rites.

But earth, no longer in her birth-day prime,
Smiles a young nursing on the lap of time ;
For o'er her vales, and hills unmoved and fast,
The deluge hath its watry ploughshare pass'd ;
And now the post-diluvian world appears
In the gray dotage of five thousand years :

Her second race, a dwindled growth of man,
His stature scarce three cubits and a span ;
While half a century, with vexations rife,
Marks the brief average of his little life!
Doom'd from his birth to wring, with daily toil,
Precarious blessings from a stubborn soil ;
Or worse—to tremble while proud commerce binds
Her eagle projects to the fickle winds ;
To plod and drudge, the dupe of golden schemes,
A splendid wretch—a mote in fortune's beams.
Yet, when are hush'd the tones of fortune's lute,
And commerce, with her hundred tongues, is
mute ;

When toil is past, and youth's wild projects o'er,
When strength can dig, and wit can scheme no
more ;

E'en then one blessing *yet* remains for life,—
Turn, veteran pilgrim, and behold thy *WIFE*.
Perchance, too proud, thy heart might prize, before,
This jewel least of all thy casket's store ;
Yet she, in youth, to thy embraces given,
Survives thy wealth, the crowning gift of heaven :

She still the same, howe'er thy thoughts have ranged,
Firm in each trial—through each change un-
changed;

A bow of promise in each gathering storm,
Thy guardian angel in a human form;
And now, in strengthless age, she still appears
Thy tottering partner down the vale of years.

In age we joyfully those scenes retrace,
Where life began, or brighten'd on its race,
The natal cottage where our parents dwelt,
The words upon the finger-post, misspelt,
The rustic churchyard, and its broken cross,
The long flat grave-stones overgrown with moss,
The village-green, which even yet appears
As when the play-ground of our earliest years—
The noisy gambols of its tribes the same,
Their unquench'd blushes of ingenuous shame,
Their limbs of strength, their cheeks of blooming
health,

Each heart estranged alike from want or wealth.
And lo! as fresh, as fragrant, and as tall,
That garden lilac overhangs the wall,

As when in courtship there we often met,
With rapturous joy, and parted with regret ;
Though many a year hath stripp'd its luscious
 boughs,
Since first they witness'd to our faithful vows.
And hark ! yon village bells sound sweet and
 clear,
Just as they sounded on the joyous ear,
When, long time since, that merry peal was borne
Along this valley on our marriage-morn.
 'Midst scenes like these, a subtle charm
 decoys
The willing fancy back through perish'd joys ;
Where, for a moment, led by memory's train,
We seem to live our boyish days again ;
But faint and chasten'd now appears each charm,
Youth strong no more, and hope no longer warm :
Thus we, at midnight's hour, have paused to mark
The lunar rainbow's pale, nocturnal arc,—
Thrown o'er light vapours, while the imprison'd
 stars
Twinkled between its pale prismatic bars :

Yet to our thoughts this iris of the moon
Recalls that richer bow that spann'd the noon ;
That with our happiest day on earth appear'd,
Like *that* day—gone, remember'd, and endear'd.

On wedlock's vine, for life's long-cherish'd care,
What glorious clusters greet the ancient pair!
When filial homage to their age is given,
Deck'd with earth's ensigns, or the gifts of
heaven ;

To see the children, which they leave behind,
The favourites or superiors of mankind ;
To see ambition's noblest trophies won,
Or science with its spoils adorn their son.
This pure fruition of their hopes arrays,
With tranquil charms, the evening of their days ;—
Life's vesper star, that, bright'ning to the tomb,
Illumes its twilight, and survives its gloom.

With what delight had CHATHAM's ear been smit,
Could he have heard the eloquence of PITT ;
When lightning-words flash'd from the statesman's
tongue,
While nations listen'd, and the senate rung !

—What raptures flatter'd each parental hope,
When early laurels crown'd the brows of POPE;
To see their son in *Windsor's* shades obtain
That immortality which poets gain!
—And with what triumph, 'midst his growing
fame,
Must CHANTREY's mother hear the sculptor's
name!

Pride sure in her were but a virtuous crime,
Who bore and nursed the Phidias of his time.

Nor with less joy shall filial worth aspire
To greet the mother, or confess the sire:
See VIDA's life, a splendid pathway, strown
With glittering honours, to the poet's crown:
Now, fix'd his fame, achieved his dearest hopes,
Enrich'd, ennobled by successive Popes;
Secure that prize which bade his soul aspire,
The double honour of the church and lyre;
(For learning wreath'd, in those romantic days,
The prelate's mitre with the poet's bays;)
He sought that village, where devoutest cares,
His father's blessings and his mother's prayers,

Cherish'd his youth ; and paused, in thought to
trace,

With what delight his parents would embrace
Their son and Bishop ! while, with reverence meet,
He laid the scholar's trophies at their feet.
Delusive hopes !—e'en now the wanderer trod,
Unknown, unknowing, on their burial sod :
To share that bliss which filial homage craves,
He-sought their dwelling—but he found their
graves.

But few days past, they sunk in mortal sleep,
And he who came for joy, remain'd to weep.

Through whate'er climes or seasons we may range,
Commencement, growth, vicissitude, and change,
Decay and dissolution reign around,
Far as the sky o'erspreads the solid ground.
'Tis true, yon orbs that track the upper space,
Wheel, undiminish'd, an appointed race ;
That earth, unshaken through the mystic sphere,
Spins on her axle, and brings round the year ;
And nature seems to pour her stores along,
As in the birth-day of creation, strong ;

Yet nature's stores, and human works, and man,
Perish'd ; and, reproduced since time began,
Are still alike weak, mutable, and brief,
The dying mortal, or the fading leaf.
Wrinkled with age, and crown'd with hoary hair,
In second childhood, lo ! the wedded pair !
Ancient coevals—even death reveres
These twin sojourners down the vale of years,
As though a guardian halo heaven had shed
Around each pilgrim's venerable head.
Wean'd from the world, its scenes of wealth and
show,
Their children's children are their playmates
now ;
And fair, I deem, and beautiful the sight,
When life's short span may thus in love unite
Three generations—blest beneath one roof,
Where filial kindness is affection's proof ;
Where prompt in tender arts that never tire,
The son becomes a father to his sire ;
Or, past maternal cares to reimburse,
The mother's daughter is the mother's nurse :

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Her cherish'd offspring, prattling round the while,
Call each dear name, and prompt the tender smile.
Thus the scathed oak, that hath for centuries
stood

The forest's pride, the monarch of the wood,
Still towers superior to the storms that drive,
While giant offspring near their parent thrive :
From these, young saplings, nourish'd on the
place,

Rise round the grandsire tree—a future race:

Who hath not seen the aged husband sink

Down to the grave; while, tottering on its brink,
Equal in years, his gray survivor stood

In the blank dream of hopeless widowhood?

And when she stoop'd, a last farewell to bid,
To take her last look at the coffin lid,

Think ye the fragments of her broken mind

Were earth-born longings yet to stay behind;

To live for years, though palsied, strengthless, bent—

Her husband's widow, mourner, monument?

No—she would fain lie down, a buried spouse,
In the damp chamber of the “narrow house ;”

Whose bed of earth, and sleep of death, shall prove
 The long communion of unconscious love.
 There needs no epitaph *his* name to save,
 Yet his memorial shall survive the grave;
 Each little grandson, bounding o'er the green,
 Call'd by his name, shall tell that he *has been!*
 These *his* memorials, and *their* sons shall be
 HIS LIVING RECORD TO POSTERITY.

With LOVE my song began—with love it rose;
 But let RELIGION'S accents mark its close
 Disown'd of heaven, the boldest, sweetest strain
 Is bold without success, and sweet in vain:
 'Tis then the poet's fascinating art
 Arms him to act the fell betrayer's part:
 He, like the serpent at the ear of Eve,
 Charms to seduce, and flatters to deceive:—
 Disown'd of heaven, the brightest virgin charms,
 E'er won by love, or clasp'd in youthful arms,
 May bring down curses on the bridegroom's head,
 In barren wedlock, or a faithless bed;
 Thwart the ambition of his fancy's scope,
 And blight the blossoms of connubial hope.

Lured by my theme, or led by duty's claim,
To give to future years thy father's name;
Or smit by one, whose charms or worth must prove
Thy world of happiness, thy heaven of love—
Oh! ere thou giv'st thy fancy reinless scope,
Pause, youthful votary of connubial hope!
Hast thou besought, with unremitting prayer,
God to approve, and make thy choice his care?
Or, should a precious progeny be given,
Art thou resolved to train them up for heaven?
Daily wilt thou the social altar raise,
And consecrate thy home with prayer and praise;
Thyself become, amidst thy household ring,
Their faithful patriarch, prophet, priest, and king?
If, with such aims, thy well-instructed heart
Yearns for a father's joys, a husband's part,
Then take a bride: unnumber'd blessings wait
To crown for thee the matrimonial state:
Then sow in faith: for thee, lo! wedlock bears
A race of happy sons, the sires of future heirs.

THE END.

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